



2023 ANNUAL REPORT



Blanchard Valley Center

Hancock County Board of Developmental Disabilities

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Kelli Grisham

A Message From
OUR SUPERINTENDENT

I can sum up 2023 in two words – “growth” and “relationships.”

From strengthening community partnerships to creating an entirely new department at BVC, we connected more than ever with local entities to provide multi-system support for individuals and families in Hancock County.

Last year, we combined forces with:

- Children Protective Services (CPS);
- Hancock County Board of Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS);
- Hancock County Educational Service Center (ESC);
- Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD); and
- Local businesses

BVC entered into a cost-sharing program with CPS and ADAMHS for individuals receiving services and supports from all three agencies. This cost-effective approach is the best use of taxpayer dollars.

Prior to partnering with ESC, we had 25 students enrolled at Blanchard Valley School – two school-age students and 23 preschoolers. Sixteen preschool students were on IEPs, while the other seven were peer models. The school remains open through ESC and receives funding from Blanchard Valley Center.

DODD allowed agencies around the state to apply for ARPA grants to increase accessibility in our communities. We secured \$50,000 for the purchase of items such as universal changing tables for local businesses. The Findlay YMCA and The Cube are each receiving one at their locations. Accessible door openers are being quoted for the Findlay-Hancock County Public Library and the YMCA. Sensory items are being purchased for the YMCA's

day care center, too. A wheelchair was purchased and provided to Family Resource Center to accommodate guests.

Through partnering with Probate Court and ADAMHS, the Great Lakes Guardianship Board was developed. Three counties have representation from ADAMHS, Probate Court, and the DD Boards. This Guardianship Board will hire guardians to be appointed by the court to individuals deemed incompetent to handle their own affairs.

Our Project LIFE team continued to work with local businesses that have provided work rotation sites for newly graduated teenagers with developmental disabilities, as well as meeting with other businesses in hopes of having them join the program. This provides recent graduates with an array of job opportunities, widening their horizons.

Internally, there was an effort to streamline processes and develop a new department that focuses on the transition phase for people we support. Our strategic planning identified the transition phase as an area in need of greater focus. The new Community Supports Department encompasses advocacy, life engagement, Special Olympics and Project LIFE. In addition, this department has staff that works specifically with high school students ages 14-22 and recent high school graduates, up to age 25 before transitioning to the SSA department.

We had many stories of growth and success for the people we support. We watched our Early Intervention Team help some of our youngsters learn to walk and talk. Our interns received job offers from their Project LIFE experience. Our great Special Olympics program won another state championship.

Without question, 2023 was a very good year.



2024 Strategic Plan
GOALS

Enhance & Develop Program Services

- Provider Support & Engagement
- Advocacy
- Community Employment
- Technology First
- Role in Schools
- Individual Personal Connections & Opportunities
- Waitlist Reduction – Reducing the Number of Individuals in the County Waiting for Services

Evaluate Internal Board Components for Long-Term Sustainability & Quality Services

- Reduce Prior Authorizations
- Increase Targeted Case Management Revenue
- Enhance Customer Service
- Strengthen Training and Development
- Evaluate Program Services
- Implement New Technology

Strengthen Collaboration with all Stakeholders

- Enhance Existing Partnerships
- Host Impactful Events



Graham Hilty

Graham Hilty is a 2 year old little boy who started in the Early Intervention (EI) program in November 2022 due to delays in motor development. Since that time, Graham has received support from a Service Coordinator, Physical Therapist, and Occupational Therapist to address his needs. His EI team has also assisted the family with referrals to specialists and outpatient therapies, as well as helping coordinate insurance paperwork. When Graham started in the EI program, he was not sitting by himself and his only way to get around was rolling. Now Graham is army-crawling all over the place and working to crawl on his hands and knees. With help, he can stand up to play with his favorite toys! His mom, Jessica, says “Early Intervention feels like an extension of our family; they want to see our son grow and develop as much as we do!” She also says that without the EI team they may have never made the connections to resources that they need to help Graham develop.

Your Hancock DD Roadmap to Services

Early Intervention

- Helps children from birth through age two meet developmental milestones.



Services & Support Administration (SSA)

- Provides person-centered supports to people, age 3 and older, by identifying goals and needs.
- The SSA links the individual and/or family to providers and resources to meet the needs.
- More than 700 individuals in Hancock County receive supports from the County Board.



Special Olympics

- The program is offered to anyone age 8 and older with a qualifying diagnosis and offers competitive sports of all skill levels.



Transition Age Services

- Transition Services connect students ages 14-22 with resources to prepare them for life after graduation, including employment and independent living.
- Project LIFE provides internships to adults 18-25, including rotations at local businesses for job exploration and on-the-job experience.



Advocacy & Life Engagement

- These programs are available to adults 18 and older who receive county board supports. The programs offer opportunities to meet new people and explore one's community.



Health & Welfare

- The Hancock County Board of Developmental Disabilities employs investigators to investigate allegations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.



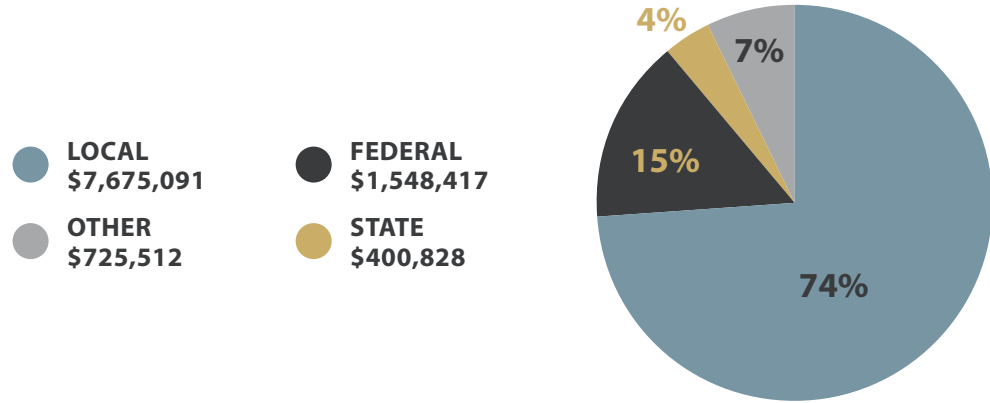
Approximately \$6.6 million in local taxes are spent on children and adults with developmental disabilities in your community, each year.



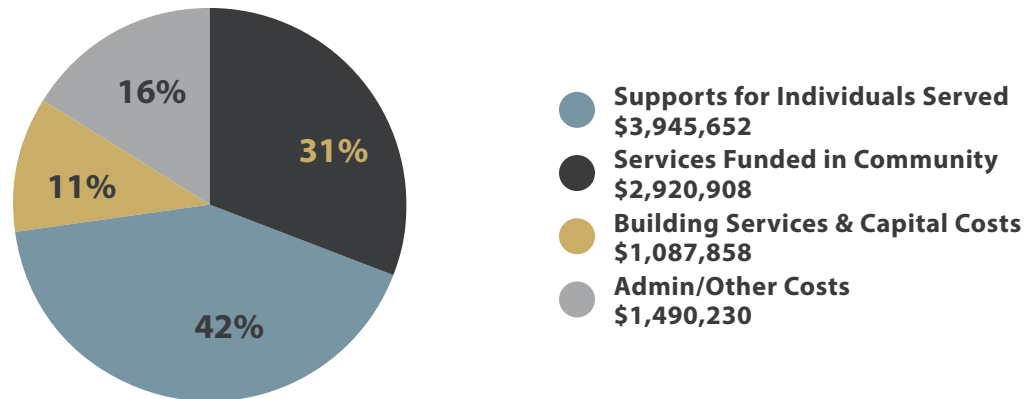
Jackson Doll

Jackson Doll is a first-year intern with Project LIFE. Before committing to the program, Jackson's parents weren't so sure of his next steps after graduation. Once hearing about Project LIFE and the opportunities available, it was a no-brainer. Since August 2023, Jackson has completed his first 10-week work rotation, as well as his independent living course. Jackson was offered a job at Oler's Bar & Grill. His parents have seen a lot of growth since August, including developing coping skills to help with his emotions and has learned to articulate his sensory needs. They are excited to see where Jackson's future takes him.

2023 Revenue: \$10,349,848



2023 Expenses: \$9,444,648



Blanchard Valley Center BY THE NUMBERS



749

After-hours Calls Received



Keeping Families Together Grant

\$34,257.07 total distributed to 27 children

Family Assistance Funds

\$31,846 total distributed to 84 children and 2 adults



63

Independent Providers

17

Agency Providers



101 People in Competitive Integrated Employment

560 People Assigned to an SSA

187 MUIs (Major Unusual Incidents) Investigated

13 Referrals for Special Education Consulting



Individuals Supported

256 ages 0-3

236 ages 3-22

324 ages 23+

185 Special Olympics Athletes



Tucker Beagle & Noah Gibson

Tucker Beagle and Noah Gibson led forums with Ohio State Highway Patrol troopers in October 2023 to create better understanding between troopers and individuals with developmental disabilities during traffic stops. Tucker and Noah offered an organic way to identify ways to make interactions with each other easier and more positive. Roughly 200 troopers were in attendance between the two forums offered in Findlay and Toledo. One takeaway for troopers was to give ample time for a response to a question. Stemming from this forum, communication cards have been created to assist law enforcement during these encounters that include an emergency contact to assist, as needed.



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